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2014 New Business Ribbon Cutting- Town of Leesburg Staff

Introduction

Welcome to Leesburg

Congratulations and welcome to the Leesburg business community! This guide is designed to make establishing your business in Leesburg as smooth and easy as possible.

As you no doubt have already discovered, there are many resources and guides to starting a business available to you, both on the Internet and from other sources. This guide is intended to supplement those resources by providing information specific to Leesburg. We encourage you to consult these other resources as you go through the process of establishing your business. These four resources may be particularly useful:

Loudoun Small Business Development Center - www.loudounsbdc.org

The Loudoun Small Business Development Center provides educational seminars, training and workshops and counseling services to small businesses. Many of their services are free.

Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

http://www.biz.loudoun.gov/Blog.aspx?tag=starting_your_small_business_in_loudoun

In addition to the Guide for Doing Business in Loudoun County, the County's website also includes a Checklist for Starting a Business and a list of Loudoun County banking institutions.

Loudoun SourceLink - <http://www.loudounsourcelink.org/home>

Loudoun SourceLink is a comprehensive one-stop website for non-profit and government service providers in Loudoun County. Whether you need assistance in writing a business plan, financing, marketing or networking opportunities, Loudoun SourceLink is the place to start!

Virginia Department of Business Assistance

- An Interactive Guide to Starting a Business in Virginia -
<http://www.bos.virginia.gov/considering.shtml>
This easy-to-use business planning tool will guide you step-by-step in creating your business plan.
- Business One Stop – <http://www.bos.virginia.gov/starting.shtml>
This site provides specific licensing, permitting and registration requirements based upon your inputs, and assists with partial completion of the necessary forms.

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

- Guide to Establishing a Business -
<http://www.yesvirginia.org/Content/pdf/Library/Guide%20to%20Establishing%20a%20Business%202013-2014.pdf>
- Guide to Local Taxes on Business -
<http://www.yesvirginia.org/Content/pdf/Library/Local%20Taxes%20Guide%202013-2014.pdf>
- Community Profiles –
<http://virginiascan.yesvirginia.org/communityprofiles/MapSearch.aspx?type=default>

Your First Stop for Information: the Leesburg Economic Development Office

If you are considering Leesburg for a new location or expansion location for your business, your first stop should be the Town's Economic Development Office. We are located at 202 Church Street SE in the Mason Enterprise Center and on the Internet at www.leesburgva.gov/business or you may contact us by phone at 703.737.7019 or email us at medwards@leesburgva.gov.

Visit our Leesburg Launch Pad!

The Leesburg Launch Pad provides information to walk you through the process of starting a business in Leesburg from start to finish. You can find this valuable new resource by clicking the Launch Pad below:



Some of the services the Town of Leesburg's Economic Development Department offers include:

- ***Site Selection Assistance***

The Economic Development Office maintains lists of available properties and commercial real estate brokers for the Town and can assist businesses with identifying locations within the Town of Leesburg. Whether leasing, buying or building to suit, site selection assistance is confidential and free of charge.

- ***Demographic Information and Market Analysis***

The office also maintains demographic, labor market, housing and population growth statistics for the Town of Leesburg. We can develop customized profiles for specific projects.

- ***Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies***

Let us help you celebrate your success! At your request, the Economic Development staff can assist with grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremonies for new businesses. Staff can coordinate attendance by Town officials and assist with press releases.

- ***Business Resource Network***

We may not know the answers to all of your questions, but chances are we know where to find the answers. The Economic Development staff is tapped into a wide network of federal, regional, state, and local business resources. We can help guide you to the right source of information and assistance.

- ***Ombudsman Services***

Despite the best intentions, sometimes things just don't go right. The Economic Development staff serves as the business advocate within the Town government. Let us help you sort out the problem and find a solution.

We welcome recommendations and suggestions for improving both this guide and the entire process for new business owners. If you have any comments or questions, please contact the Leesburg Economic Development Office at 703.737.7019 or by e-mail at medwards@leesburgva.gov. You may

also stop by Mason Enterprise Center, at 202 Church Street SE in downtown Leesburg, and ask to speak with a member of the Economic Development staff.

Business Start Up Checklist

Background Research and Preparation

- Visit the Town of Leesburg Economic Development Office.
- Research Leesburg business climate.
- Write a business plan.
- Investigate financing options.

Finding and Establishing a Location

- Research business location.
 - ♦ Real Estate Broker.
 - ♦ Leesburg Economic Development Office.
- Obtain a zoning permit or home occupation permit.
- Obtain a sign permit.
- Obtain a BAR certificate of appropriateness if applicable.

Registering Your Business

- Register with State Corporation Commission, if applicable.
- Register a trade name with Loudoun County Clerk of Court.
- Obtain a Town of Leesburg business license.
- Register with Loudoun County to pay personal property tax.
- Register with the Virginia Department of Taxation.
- Register with appropriate state and county regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Starting Out

First Steps

▪ ***Writing a Business Plan***

A business plan is one of the most important aspects of starting a new business and is frequently the key that will unlock potential financing options for new business owners. Moreover, writing a business plan will become a great help to you as you explore the details of starting a business.

Many other business guides have excellent tips and resources for writing a business plan. The Town of Leesburg can provide you resources that will help in completing the market research for your business plan including demographic data on Leesburg and analysis of the town-wide retail market and the downtown. For more information, visit www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=208.

In addition, there are local resources available to help you write a business plan. The most often used resource is the Loudoun Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located in the Mason Enterprise Center at 202 Church Street SE Leesburg, VA. The SBDC is funded through the United States Department of Commerce with support from the Town of Leesburg and Loudoun County, and offers free personalized services to small businesses. The Loudoun SBDC can be reached at www.loudounsbdc.org or at 703.430.7222.

▪ ***Financing***

Starting a business requires capital. While many start-up businesses are self-financed, there are a number of sources for external financing for small businesses including bank financing, angel investors, and venture capital firms. The companion resources available from Loudoun County, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and the Virginia Department of Business Assistance's online Business Launch Pad document outlines the various types of financing available for local businesses. For more information, visit the SBDC website: <http://loudounsbdc.org/> or the U.S. Small Business Administration's website at: <http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/loans-grants>

Loudoun County Department of Economic Development
Incentives & Financing
<http://www.biz.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?nid=97>

In addition, there is an appendix to this guide, available online, that contains a list of banks in Leesburg, with commercial lending contacts.

Registering and Licensing Your Business

▪ ***Business Structure***

The requirements for business registration vary, depending upon the type of business ownership. The most common forms of business ownership are sole proprietorship, partnership (general, limited and limited liability), limited liability company and corporation. You should consult with an accountant, attorney or business counselor about the type of ownership that best meets your needs. Ultimately, you will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Federal Tax ID number. Sole proprietorships without employees may use their Social Security Number instead. Information on federal taxes for small businesses can be found at www.irs.gov/businesses/small.

Regardless of the type of business, you will also need to take steps for your business to meet state, county, and local governmental requirements.

▪ ***State Registration***

Corporations, limited liability companies and partnerships must register with the State Corporation Commission before a Town business license can be issued. Contact:

Virginia State Corporation Commission
Clerk's Office
PO Box 1197
Richmond VA 23209
804.371.9733
1.866.722.2551 (toll free, in Virginia only)
www.scc.virginia.gov

From this web location you can download the *Business Registration Guide*, which will walk you through the steps for registering a business in the Commonwealth. You must also register your business with the Virginia Department of Taxation 804.367.8037. This can be done online at <https://www.ireg.tax.virginia.gov/VTOL/Login.seam>.

▪ ***Assumed Name (Trade Name) Registration***

Sole proprietorships and *partnerships* must register their business or trade names with the Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court. Corporations and *limited liability companies* doing business under names other than the names registered with the State Corporation Commission must also register their assumed names with the Clerk of the Circuit Court. For more information, contact:

Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court
18 East Market Street
Leesburg VA 20176
703.777.0270

Registration forms are available on the internet at <http://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?nid=1161>

▪ ***Local Business Licenses***

Most businesses, including home-based businesses and contractors, located within or transacting business within the Town of Leesburg are required to have a Town of Leesburg business, professional and occupational license (BPOL). To obtain your business license, visit the Town of Leesburg Finance Department on the first floor of Town Hall, located at 25 West Market Street. For more information, call the Leesburg Finance Department at 703.771.2723, visit them online at: <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=753>

Contractors and other businesses with more than one location may need to have business licenses from the other local Virginia jurisdictions in which they do business. For more information about these requirements, contact the local jurisdictions where you do business for additional details.

When you complete the Leesburg BPOL Application, you are registering for the payment of taxes based on gross receipts. For more information about the BPOL rates, see page 12 of this guide.

As part of the BPOL application process, you'll need the Leesburg Zoning Administrator's approval of your application, so that your business is allowed in that location under the Leesburg Zoning

Ordinance. This approval usually can be done at the time of application and takes five to ten minutes. For more information about zoning within the Town of Leesburg, see pages 18- 21 of this guide.

▪ ***State Regulated Businesses, Professions and Occupations***

The Commonwealth of Virginia regulates some businesses, professions and occupations for reasons of public health, safety and welfare. These businesses are required to have state licenses in order to operate and may be required to demonstrate that certain minimum standards in education, training or proficiency have been met. Depending on the type of business, the license will be issued by one of these four state agencies.

Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation. The Virginia Department of Professional & Occupation Regulation licenses these professions and occupations:

Architects	Land Surveyors
Asbestos & Lead Contractors	Landscape Architects
Auctioneers	Nail Technicians
Barbers	Opticians
Boxers/Wrestlers	Polygraph Examiners
Branch Pilots	Real Estate Appraisers
Cemetery Companies & Sale Personnel	Real Estate Brokers & Sales People
Contractors	Soil Scientists, Professional
Cosmetologists	Tradesmen (Electrical, HVAC, Plumbing, Gas-fitting)
Engineers, Professional	Waste Management Facility Operators
Geologists	Water and Wastewater Works Operator
Home Inspectors, Certified	
Interior Designers, Certified	

For more information on the Commonwealth of Virginia's license requirements for these professions and occupations, contact:

Virginia Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400
Richmond, VA 23233
804.367.8500
www.dpor.virginia.gov

Department of Health Professions. The Virginia Department of Health Professions has 14 boards that regulate more than 50 health-related businesses, professions and occupations. For a complete list of regulated businesses and more information about licensure requirements, contact:

Virginia Department of Health Professions
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23233
804.367.4400
www.dhp.virginia.gov

Department of Social Services. The Virginia Department of Social Services, Division of Licensing Programs regulates certified preschools, child care centers, and some home-based child care businesses. For more information about licensure requirements, contact:

Virginia Department of Social Services
11320 Random Hills Road, Suite 200
Fairfax VA 22030
703.934.1505
<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/about/licensing.html>

Note: Most child care centers within the Town of Leesburg require a Special Exception. See page 23 for more information about the Special Exception process.

The Loudoun County Office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension periodically offers a one-day seminar on “The Business of Family Child Care.” For more information, contact the Extension Office at 703.777.0373.

Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control licenses all businesses involved in the production, distribution, transportation and sale of alcoholic beverages. All restaurants and cafes that serve alcohol must be licensed. Be sure to look into this early in the planning stage, as it may take time to obtain necessary permits. For more information, contact:

Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
PO Box 27491
Richmond, Virginia 23261
804.213.4400
www.abc.virginia.gov/licensing.html

▪ ***County Regulated Businesses***

Loudoun County Department of Environmental Health. The Department of Environmental Health regulates hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, swimming pools, and all food related establishments. Be sure to contact them early in the planning stages, as it may take time to obtain necessary permits. Downloadable forms and information are on their web site.

Loudoun County Department of Health
Urban Environmental Health Information
1 Harrison Street SE, 2nd floor
Leesburg VA 20175
Phone: 703.771.5806
<http://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?nid=111>

Business Taxes and Fees

Town Business License (BPOL) Tax

Most businesses located within the corporate limits of the Town of Leesburg are required to have a Town of Leesburg Business, Professional and Occupation License (BPOL), including home-based businesses. To obtain your business license, visit the Department of Finance on the first floor of Town Hall, located at 25 West Market Street.

The tax associated with this license is either a percentage of gross receipts or a flat rate. Businesses subject to the gross receipts tax rate with less than \$50,000 in gross receipts pay a flat rate of \$20.00. Current BPOL rates on gross receipts are:

Amusements	\$0.25 per \$100 of gross receipts
Building Contractors and Trades	\$0.10 per \$100 of gross receipts
Business Service Occupations	\$0.20 per \$100 of gross receipts
Hotel/Motel/B&B	\$0.23 per \$100 of gross receipts
Massage Therapy	\$0.20 per \$100 of gross receipts
Money Lenders	\$0.16 per \$100 of gross receipts
Personal Service Occupations	\$0.20 per \$100 of gross receipts
Professional, Specialized Businesses	\$0.20 per \$100 of gross receipts
Public Utilities	\$0.50 per \$100 of gross receipts
Repair Service Occupations	\$0.15 per \$100 of gross receipts
Retail Merchants	\$0.10 per \$100 of gross receipts
Vending Machine Merchants	\$0.10 per \$100 of gross receipts
Wholesale Merchants	\$0.075 per \$100 of gross receipts

Current BPOL flat tax rates are:

Building/Savings & Loan Associations	\$50 annually
Cable Television Companies	\$25 annually
Fortune Tellers	\$500 annually
Peddlers & Itinerant Vendors	\$250 annually
Alcoholic Beverages (ABC)	
• Retail on premises - beer	\$25 annually
• Retail on <i>or</i> off premises - wine and beer	\$37.50 annually
• Retail on <i>and</i> off premises - wine and beer	\$75 annually
Mixed Beverage Licenses (Restaurants)	
• 50 – 100 seats	\$200 annually
• 101 – 150 seats	\$350 annually
• More than 150 seats	\$500 annually
Coin Operated Amusement Machines	
• 1 – 5 machines	\$100 annually
• 6 – 9 machines	\$150 annually
• 10 or more machines	\$200 annually

If you have questions about which category includes your business, please contact the Department of Finance at 703.771.2701, bl@leesburgva.gov or visit www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=753.

When you receive your business license, you will pay estimated taxes based on the gross receipts that you expect to generate through the end of the calendar year. In March of the following year, you will receive a business license renewal form. When you submit the renewal form, you will need to include any additional tax owed, if your gross receipts exceeded your estimate.

In March of each year, business license renewal forms are sent to all businesses. When submitting the renewal form, businesses state their gross receipts for the previous year and include the appropriate amount of tax due. Business license renewals are due by May 1 of each year.

As part of the BPOL application process, you will need the Leesburg Zoning Administrator to approve the application, indicating that your business is allowed in that location under the Leesburg Zoning Ordinance. In most cases, this approval can be done at the time of application and takes five to 10 minutes. For more information about zoning within the Town of Leesburg, see page 21 of this guide.

Business Tangible Personal Property Tax

Both the Town of Leesburg and the County of Loudoun tax businesses on the value of tangible personal property, such as manufacturing equipment and tools, office equipment, and computers. The tax is based on the original total capitalized cost and the age of the property. Property is taxed at 50% of cost the first year and is reduced 10% each year thereafter until a minimum of 10% is reached. The current tax rates for each \$100 of valuation are shown in this table.

	Nominal Tax Rate
Town of Leesburg	\$1.00
Loudoun County	\$4.20
Total	\$5.20

When you register for your Town of Leesburg business license, you will receive a copy of the Loudoun County Business Tangible Personal Property Registration form. You must complete and submit this form to the Department of Finance.

Water and Sewer Availability Fees

Water and sewer availability fees purchase capacity with the Town's water and sewer system. They are one-time fees by which the Town recovers the cost of the infrastructure needed to provide water and sewer service. These fees are paid when a building first receives water and sewer service. For an existing or previously occupied space, you will have to pay availability fees only if your business will have a higher water use than the previous occupant. In that case, you would pay only the difference between the availability fees for the previous and new uses. An exception to this requirement is when a business locates in the Historic District, in which case you would pay additional availability fees only if your business requires a larger water meter than the existing water meter. If you expect to use a large quantity of water, you should contact the utilities division early in the planning process. Questions should be directed to Utilities Generalist Lisa Smith at lsmith@leesburgva.gov or 703.771.2762.

Availability fees are calculated using average daily usages based on historical usages by various types of businesses. Current commercial categories and estimated daily usages are:

Office	33 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet*
Retail	36 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet*
Industrial/Warehouse	10 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet*
Hotels	90 gallons per day per room*
Hair Salons	80 gallons per day per styling chair*
Restaurants:	
• Full service*	10 gallons per seat per meal per day/seat/meal*
• Limited service/fast food	8 gallons per seat per meal per day/seat/meal*
• Deli/Carry out – no seating	30 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet*
• Coffee shops	890 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet*

*The minimum availability fee is \$11,975.

Current FY 2015 water and sewer availability fees are:

\$13.33 per gallon for water service
\$20.20 per gallon for sewer service
 \$33.53 total per gallon

Minimum combined water & sewer availability fees for new commercial construction are \$11,975. The table below illustrates several examples of availability fees that would be charged for new construction, depending on the use:

Office Building – 15,000 Sq Ft	\$16,597
Retail Store – 15,000 Sq Ft	\$18,106
Warehouse Building – 50,000 Sq Ft	\$16,765
Hair Salon, 10 styling chairs	\$26,824
Full-service Restaurant, 60 seats, 2 meals a day*	\$40,236
Fast-food Restaurant, 60 seats, 3 meals a day	\$48,283
Carry-out Restaurant - 1,500 Sq Ft (minimum fees apply)	\$11,975

*When calculating availability fees for restaurants, outdoor seating and seats located at a bar are excluded from the calculation.

**Availability fees in excess of \$10,000 for water service and \$15,000 for sewer service may be paid in installments pursuant to a contract that has been approved by the Town Manager. Such contract shall coincide with a commercial lease, but for not more than 60 monthly installments.

Other Local Taxes

▪ Real Estate Taxes

Businesses that own real estate pay both Loudoun County and Town of Leesburg real estate taxes. The 2014 Town real estate tax rate is \$0.183 for each \$100 of assessed value. Leesburg residents also pay taxes to the County of Loudoun at the rate of \$1.155 for each \$100 of assessed value for real

estate, for total combined tax rate of \$1.298 for each \$100 of assessed value. Assessments are conducted by Loudoun County. For questions concerning assessments, contact the Loudoun County Commissioner of Revenue at 703.777.0260. Tax payments are due on June 5 and December 5 of each year.

▪ ***Sales & Use Tax***

The combined state and local sales tax rate is 7% (6% state and Northern Virginia tax and 1% local), except on food items purchased for home consumption. The local sales tax is collected by Loudoun County and a portion is distributed to the Town of Leesburg. The combined sales tax rate on food items purchased for home consumption is 2.5%. Please contact the Virginia Department of Taxation at 804.367.8037 or www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=SalesUseTax to register your business.

▪ ***Meals Tax***

An additional tax of 3.5% is charged on prepared food served or sold within the Town. If you are operating a restaurant, deli, coffee shop or other business that sells prepared food, please contact the Department of Finance at 703.771.2701 to receive a Meals Tax Package. Meals taxes are paid on a quarterly basis.

▪ ***Transient Occupancy Tax***

A tax of 8% is charged on transient lodging (hotels, motels and B&Bs) in the Town.

Finding a Location for Your Business

Three criteria will determine where you locate your business: location, size and cost. Before you start your site selection process, you need to have some idea of where you want to be, how much space you need and how much you can afford to spend each month. You will need to decide also which of those three criteria (location, size and cost) is the most important. If location is most important, you may have to compromise on the size or on the monthly rent in order to be in an optimum location.



Locations in Leesburg

- ***Downtown (1)***

Downtown Leesburg is the historic and cultural center of the community. Its unique architecture and pedestrian-friendly environment are ideally suited for some businesses. Typically, downtown Leesburg is a location for small independent retailers and a wide variety of professional and personal service businesses. The Leesburg Downtown Business Association (www.downtownleesburgva.com) markets and promotes downtown businesses. The Town of Leesburg Economic Development Office provides assistance on a host of downtown issues. For more information visit: www.leesburgva.com.

- ***Crescent District (2)***

The commercial corridors along Catoctin Circle, East Market Street and South King Street lead into the downtown area and offer a wide variety of business locations for a host of businesses. The corridors have a great variety of location options from freestanding businesses to shopping centers and office parks. This area is expected to transition over time to become an extension of downtown.

Toward that end, the Town of Leesburg enacted the Crescent Design District in March, 2013 to achieve a more urban style, reminiscent of the Historic Downtown area. To learn more about this progressive new approach visit the Town's website at: <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1692> The Catoctin Crescent Association was created to build awareness of the district and to encourage a sense of community and support among all businesses "On the Crescent". You can visit them at: <http://www.onthecrescent.org/>

- ***Route 7 East (3)***

The Route 7 Corridor East, outside the bypass, is one of Leesburg's fastest growing business locations. From office developments to retail centers, this corridor offers a variety of business locations.

- ***Edwards Ferry, Fort Evans, Leesburg Corner (4)***

This area centers on several large retail centers including the Leesburg Corner Premium Outlet Center with more than 100 retail shops. This area features high-visibility locations on heavily traveled corridors and is a gateway to the Town.

- ***Leesburg Executive Airport Area (5)***

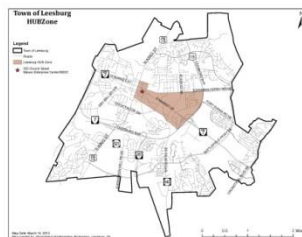
This area is primarily a light industrial and office area adjacent to the Leesburg Executive Airport.

- ***Leesburg Arts and Cultural District (designated in blue)***

This area has been designated as a concentration point for arts uses and related businesses. Qualified Arts Organizations who locate within this area or property owners who lease to such organizations may be eligible for tax incentives. Please contact the Economic Development Department at 703.737.7019 for more information.

- ***Leesburg HUBZone (see map below)***

The Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZone) program helps small businesses gain preferential access to federal procurement opportunities. The Town of Leesburg gained HUBZone status on January 1, 2013 for a portion of the downtown area from King Street to the Route 7/Route 15 Bypass and from Edwards Ferry Road to the W&OD Trail. Since then, Leesburg has attracted 32 new companies and 161 new jobs!



The Leesburg Economic Development Department has developed many valuable resources to help small businesses take advantage of this opportunity to win federal contracts:

HUBZone Available properties database- The Town of Leesburg maintains a current list of office vacancies that are qualified locations for the HUBZone program. You can get this list by contacting Marantha Edwards, Director of Economic Development, at medwards@leesburgva.gov

Visit our HUBZone page on the Town of Leesburg website at: <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1745> for a complete list of resources.

Leesburg HUBZone Business Partners Meetings- The Town of Leesburg hosts these meetings in the Mason Enterprise Center at 202 Church Street SE in Leesburg. They offer businesses in the HUBZone program resources on HUBZone certification and business development. Usually held on the fourth Monday of each month, they are a great way to learn about the program and network with other businesses. Contact Marantha Edwards, Director of Economic Development at medwards@leesburgva.gov for more information.

Anna Urman, Director, at the Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Program (VA PTAP) is an excellent resource for the HUBZone program and federal contracting in general. You can visit their website at <http://www.vaptap.org/> and watch her presentation on the HUBZone program from the June 23, 2014 HUBZone Business Partners Meeting at <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1745>

The Loudoun SBDC is also a valuable partner in the Leesburg HUBZone, and you can contact them at: www.loudounsbdc.org

Leasing Basics

▪ *Lease Rates*

Commercial lease rates are typically quoted in dollars a square foot year. In downtown Leesburg, current office lease rates range from \$17.00/sf to \$32.00/sf, depending upon location and amenities. As an example, the monthly rent for an office that is 1,500 square feet and leases for \$20.00/sf is \$2,500. Suburban rates are comparable to downtown.

▪ *Full Service versus Triple Net Leases*

A full-service lease includes the cost of common area maintenance, such as landscaping, lobby, trash pickup, snow removal, real property taxes and utilities. With a triple-net lease, the tenant is responsible for those costs. And, of course, there are leases that fall somewhere between full service and triple net. Before you sign a lease, ensure that you understand all of the costs you will be expected to pay. For example, if you are leasing an office condo, you may be responsible for paying any special assessments levied by the condo association.

▪ *Annual Escalation Clauses*

Typically, commercial lease terms range from three to ten years and include an annual rent increase of three percent to five percent. If you have a triple-net lease, the additional expenses for which you are responsible may increase more than three percent to five percent because your monthly payments will be based on the previous year's actual expenses.

Selecting a Site

The Leesburg Economic Development Office maintains information about currently available lease space, vacant land for sale, commercial properties under development, and market statistics. Please visit www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=221 for more information.

- ***Step 1. Set your budget range.***

If you have written a business plan, you will know how much you can afford to spend each month. If you haven't written a business plan, you'll need to determine a range that you feel comfortable committing each month to rent.

- ***Step 2. Determine what is available and how much it costs.***

The Leesburg Economic Development Office can provide you with a list of lease spaces currently on the market and discuss the location options in Leesburg.

- ***Step 3. Familiarize yourself with the market.***

One of the best ways to become familiar with what is on the market is to drive around and look for real estate signs. If you have questions about a particular property, either call the listing broker or contact the Leesburg Economic Development Office.

- ***Step 4. Find a commercial real estate broker.***

Most people select one real estate broker and work with that broker, from start to finish. Just as you would not ask two accountants to do your taxes at the same time and only pay the one who finishes first, working with more than one real estate broker at the same time to find a location can be problematic. There is an appendix to this guide, available online, that contains a list of commercial real estate agencies in Leesburg. Consider interviewing several brokers in order to find one with whom you feel comfortable. If you do choose to work with more than one broker, we recommend that you make the brokers aware of that relationship.

- ***Step 5. Be an active participant in selecting a site.***

Even though you may be working with a real estate broker, don't stop looking around on your own. If you find a location for lease, bring it to your broker's attention. Just like with residential brokers, commercial brokers are not limited to showing you only their own listings.

- ***Step 6. Be realistic in your expectations.***

Both office and retail vacancy rates in Leesburg are below average for the area. It may take you several months or longer, to find a location that meets your needs. If you are unfamiliar with the real estate market in the Northern Virginia, you may experience sticker shock at lease rates. A carefully crafted business plan can help set realistic expectations for business cash-flow and costs.

Before Signing on the Dotted Line

- ***Know your obligations.***

Once you find a location that meets your needs, you need to make sure that you fully understand all of your obligations under the lease. Ask the landlord to prepare a letter of intent that spells out the landlord's and tenant's respective responsibilities. Have your lawyer review the letter before proceeding to the preparation of a lease.

- ***Know the conditions for default.***

Under what conditions can you terminate the lease early? Under what conditions can the landlord evict you from the premises? For your own protection, you need to know the default conditions.

- ***Have your lawyer review your lease.***

Real estate brokers are licensed to prepare and execute leases, but it is a good idea to have your attorney review the lease before you sign.

- ***Do a pre-occupancy walk-through.***

Just as you would with a residential lease, you should make note of the condition and the contents of the space before you take occupancy. If your landlord does not have a checklist, make your own or ask your real estate broker to prepare one. Be sure to list all of the included personal property, such as desks, chairs, shelving units, and refrigerator. Do the walk-through with the landlord or the landlord's representative. You will both sign and date two copies of the completed checklist and each will keep a copy.

Interior Renovations

More often than not, a previously occupied space will need some interior renovation prior to opening a new business in it. Those interior renovations may be as simple as painting or could be as extensive as putting up or taking down interior walls. The landlord may include interior fit-up or build-out costs in the lease, usually a specific dollar amount a square foot. If not, you can ask the landlord to pay for any renovations and spread the cost out over the life of the lease. Alternatively, the landlord may simply allow you to do the interior renovations at your own expense. Whoever pays for the interior renovations, there are two caveats.

1. Do not do anything without the landlord's consent.
2. If the work requires a building or zoning permit, go through the permit process *before* beginning any work. It will *not* be better to ask forgiveness rather than permission in this situation. Having work stopped by the building inspector and then having to go back through the permit process can be both costly and time-consuming. The Town of Leesburg's zoning department can be reached at: <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=349> and the Loudoun County zoning administration can be reached at: <http://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?NID=1749>

Common Pitfalls and Mistakes

Finally, here are some questions that you should ask before you sign a lease.

1. Is your type of business an allowed use on this property? Ask the Town's Zoning Division if it is. The next section of the guide provides greater detail about the zoning process.
2. Who pays for parking? How much parking is allotted?
3. How much liability insurance does the landlord require that you carry?
4. Who maintains the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems?
5. Are there any restrictions on the property, either by zoning, a condominium association or the landlord that will affect your ability to operate your business?

Permits and Processes

The Zoning Ordinance

The Town of Leesburg Zoning Ordinance divides the Town into zoning districts that define what uses are permitted within each district. Prior to purchasing property, signing a lease or opening your business, you will need to determine if your business is permitted in that location. The Zoning Ordinance is available at www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=349. If you have questions about the Zoning Ordinance, please call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765.

▪ ***Zoning Districts***

There are nine non-residential zoning district and three planned development district designations in which commercial uses are allowed. In Leesburg there are four common non-residential zoning districts.

- ***B-1, Downtown Business.*** This district recognizes the downtown area as the center of Leesburg's employment, tourism and specialty commercial activity. The district is established to implement the Historic Commercial District land use policies of the Town Plan by accommodating small to medium size, pedestrian-oriented retail uses that attract shoppers and tourists from throughout the region. Residential uses--typically above the ground floor of retail uses--are also considered primary uses within the B-1 District. Some office, financial, and personal service uses are allowed as secondary uses in the B-1 District.
- ***B-2, Established Corridor Commercial.*** The B-2 District exists solely to accommodate previously approved corridor commercial development and to permit reasonable development of lands within existing B-2 Districts.
- ***B-3, Community Retail/Commercial.*** The B-3 District exists to implement the Community Center policies of the Town Plan and is intended primarily to accommodate moderate-size, retail and service-oriented land uses that serve Leesburg area residents. Uses within the B-3 District typically draw from a trade area of three to five miles. The district is generally appropriate for application in areas designated in the Town Plan for Community Commercial development.
- ***I-1, Industrial/Research Park.*** The I-1 District exists solely to accommodate previously approved industrial/research park development and to permit reasonable development of lands within existing I-1 Districts until those lands are rezoned to classifications that are consistent with the Town Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance lists the uses that are allowed in each of the zoning districts. New business owners should consult the Zoning Ordinance to determine whether their business is allowed in a

particular location. The Leesburg Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map can be downloaded from the web at www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=349. Allowed business uses will fall into two zoning types: by-right uses and special exception uses. A by-right use is allowed in the district with only administrative review. A special exception use requires an additional review of the use and legislative action to determine if it is compatible with the surrounding areas. The following sections provide information on procedures and permits necessary for both by-right and special exception uses.

Changes to a Building or New Construction

Most new businesses in Leesburg will require some degree of new construction, interior construction, or alteration to a building to begin operation. These changes require a business owner to go through a permit process to secure a Zoning Permit, a Building Permit, and ultimately an Occupancy Permit.

▪ *Zoning Permits*

Zoning permits are administered by the Town of Leesburg Department of Planning & Zoning and are required any time there is a change in use, tenant fit-out or new construction. Each application for a zoning permit must be accompanied by a plan for the changes drawn to scale and should be submitted to the Town for review. The Town has a 10-day turnaround for basic zoning permits and a fee is required. For zoning permit forms and a schedule of fees visit:

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=602>.

▪ *Building Permits*

After acquiring a Town zoning permit, you will need to apply for a Loudoun County building permit. Please note that Loudoun County will not issue a building permit for a property in the Town of Leesburg without a Town zoning permit having been issued first. While some building permits can be issued over the counter while a customer waits, most will take some time to review. For more information on building permits visit <http://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?nid=848>.

▪ *Occupancy Permits*

After construction work is complete on a project for which a Loudoun County Building Permit has been issued, a signature from the Town's Department of Planning & Zoning must be obtained prior to the issuance of your occupancy permit by Loudoun County. The permit is on a Loudoun County form and is submitted to the Town of Leesburg along with as-built plans for the changes.

Sign Permits

The Town of Leesburg Department of Planning & Zoning issues sign permits based on the Zoning Ordinance. Sign permits are required for all signs and should be filed on an application form provided by the Zoning Administrator. For each sign, a separate application is required, accompanied by two sets of plans that show the overall design of the proposed sign and its location. For more information about sign permit applications and for a schedule of fees, visit

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1823>.

▪ *Types of Signs*

The Leesburg Zoning Ordinance allows wall, window, monument, roof, projecting, awning, sandwich board, canopy, kiosk, and marquee signs for businesses, with no more than two signs per business.

For more information on the types of signs allowed and regulations pertaining to signs, please consult the Zoning Ordinance or the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765.

▪ ***Signs in the Old & Historic District***

Signs in the Old & Historic District (H-1) and H-2 Corridor Overlay District (the King Street & Market Street corridors outside the Old & Historic District) have more specific design guidelines. Many signs can be approved administratively; however, in certain cases some signs may require the approval of the Board of Architectural Review. For information regarding the maximum size of signs and for details regarding sign regulations for a specific type of business, please consult the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765. The Sign Permit form and a schedule of permit fees are downloadable at <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1823>. To determine whether your business falls within the boundaries of the Old & Historic District, you may view the district map at <http://www.leesburgva.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=2141>.

▪ ***Comprehensive Sign Plans for Retail Centers***

Many of the multi-tenant commercial buildings and retail centers in Town have comprehensive sign plans that specify the types, sizes and colors of signs for those locations. To determine if your building or retail center has a comprehensive sign plan, please consult the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765.

▪ ***Temporary Signs***

Temporary Signs may be permitted for promotional events or temporary business identification. Temporary signs for promotional events are allowed for up to fourteen (14) continuous days up to five (5) times a year. Temporary signs to identify new businesses are allowed for a period of up to forty five (45) days prior to the approval of permanent signage. A one-time renewal for temporary business identification signs is may be permitted for a period of up to thirty (30) days upon approval by the Zoning Administrator or designee.

A temporary sign permit is required for all temporary signs. Prior to the issuance of a temporary sign permit, the applicant must submit all information requested by the Zoning Administrator. The approved permit includes an expiration date, but the applicant can request extensions of the permit for a good cause. Information on temporary sign permits is available by contacting the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765.

Special Exceptions and Rezoning

Special Exception uses are those that because of their potential for adverse impacts on adjacent properties are given a greater level of scrutiny by the Town Council prior to their approval in a particular location (for example, a restaurant may be allowed by-right, but a restaurant with a drive-through lane requires a Special Exception). A Rezoning is required if a property owner desires to change the zoning designation of a property to introduce uses not permitted under that property's current zoning designation.

The Town's Planning & Zoning Department publishes annual Procedures Manuals for Rezoning and Special Exception applications. The following is a brief overview of the process. Please refer to the Procedures Manuals for more detailed information. For free copies of the manuals from the department, call 703.771. 2765 or visit the Central Plan Intake Counter on the second floor of Town Hall. To download of PDF files of the manuals, visit www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=246.

▪ **Special Exceptions**

The special exception review process allows the Town Council and Planning Commission the opportunity to evaluate a proposed use to determine its compatibility with surrounding properties and place specific conditions on the use to mitigate impacts of that use on the neighborhood. In doing so, the special exception will go through a public process that usually takes about six to eight months from start to finish depending on the complexity of the application.

The first step toward obtaining a special exception requires a pre-application meeting with Town staff followed by a formal application process. Special exception applications are due on the first Monday of each month to enter that month's cycle. Staff will take a 10-day period to approve or reject the application based on it being complete.

An approved application will then enter the staff review process. After staff review, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Town Council, which will make the final decision on the special exception. For additional information regarding special exception requirements, applications, and fees, please visit the Department of Planning & Zoning or their website, <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1787>.

▪ **Rezoning**

The Leesburg Zoning Ordinance provides zoning districts to accommodate most businesses in the Town. However, a property owner may wish to rezone property to change the zoning designation to introduce uses not permitted under that property's current zoning designation. The rezoning process can be a more time-consuming process that can take six months or longer to complete depending on the complexity of the application. Rezoning applications often involve proffers whereby the applicant commits to making improvements, or payments for improvements that mitigate impacts created by the development resulting from the rezoning.

Similar to the special exception process, a pre-application meeting is required with Town staff prior to submission of the application. The pre-application meeting is an opportunity for applicants to introduce the project and discuss the details of the application with Town staff. The deadline for submitting rezoning applications is the first Monday of each month.

Within 10 business days, the Town will officially accept or reject an application and notify the applicant. Once approved by the Town, the rezoning application will go through the public process that will involve two public hearings, the first before the Planning Commission and the second before the Town Council. For additional information regarding rezoning requirements, applications, and fees, please visit the Department of Planning & Zoning website at <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=1786>.

Businesses Located in the Old & Historic District and H-2 Overlay District

The Old & Historic Overlay (H-1) District for downtown and the H-2 Corridor Overlay Districts for Market and King Streets require an additional review process to ensure that any changes made to the exterior of a building are compatible with the surrounding character of the neighborhood. If your business is located in one of these areas and you want to make any changes to the exterior appearance of the building, including changing paint colors, your proposed changes will



need to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR). The BAR meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Town Hall. The deadline for applications is approximately three weeks prior to the meeting. The staff preservation planner can provide assistance to businesses wishing to make these changes and provide copies of the design guidelines used to evaluate those changes.

Because the Old & Historic District is a National Register District, tax credits for renovation work on historic buildings may be possible. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has information about tax credits at www.dhr.virginia.gov.

To learn more about the design review process and to get an application, call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765 or visit www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=345.

Home-Based Businesses

The Town of Leesburg allows certain businesses and occupations to be conducted as home-based businesses, or home occupations. A home-based business requires both a Business License, issued by the Department of Finance (see page 12), and a Home Occupation Permit, issued by the Department of Planning & Zoning. The Home Occupation Permit application can be found at www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=349. There is a fee for this permit.

▪ *Allowed Businesses*

The following home occupations are permitted, subject to the requirements of the Leesburg Zoning Ordinance:

- Artist and sculptor
- Author and composer
- Barber shop and beauty shop
- Caterer
- Computer programming, data processing, typing and word processing service
- Direct sale product distribution
- Dressmaker, seamstress and tailor
- Home-based child care service for up to five children
- Home crafts, such as model making, rug weaving, lapidary work, and ceramics, for sale off-site
- House cleaning service, laundry and ironing service
- Jewelry making and jeweler
- Licensed massage therapy
- Locksmith
- Music lessons
- Office for professional in fields such as, but not limited to, architecture, drafting and graphics, interior design, engineering, financial planning, and other consulting services
- Office of a minister, rabbi, priest or other similar person associated with a religious organization
- Office of a salesman, sales representative, or manufacturer's representative, provided that no retail or wholesale transactions are made in person on the premises
- Similar use which does not involve retail or wholesale sales transactions in person on the premises or employment of persons other than members of the family occupying the dwelling
- Telephone answering services and solicitation work
- Tutoring
- High-speed internet access provider

▪ ***Limits and Prohibitions***

A home occupation must be conducted entirely within the residence of the principal owner. No storage or display of goods should be visible from outside the residence. The home occupation business should not generate significant volumes of traffic for the surrounding neighborhood.

All business generated by the home occupation must be done in a manner that protects the residential character of the area and the visual appearance of the residence.

For more information on limits to home occupations, please consult the Leesburg Zoning Ordinance or the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.771. 2765. The home occupation forms are downloadable from the following web link: www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=349.

In addition to Town regulations, some neighborhoods in Leesburg have Home Owner Association Covenants that establish additional rules for Home Based Businesses. Consult your neighborhood HOA Board or Property Management Company for more information.

▪ ***Business Meeting Places for Home-Based Businesses***

A variety of public and private meeting facilities are available in Town for businesses to rent on an hourly basis. The list below represents a good faith effort to identify these places, but should not be considered comprehensive. For lunch or dinner meetings, some restaurants in Town offer private dining rooms. In addition, many banks in Town make their conference rooms available to their clients. Check with your bank.

Ida Lee Recreation Center

60 Ida Lee Drive NW

703.777.1368

www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=295

Owned by the Town of Leesburg, Ida Lee Recreation Center has a variety of meeting rooms and banquet spaces for 15 to 175 people. Each room has a drop-down projection screen, but no projector and is fully wired for internet access. In addition, the facility features a warming kitchen, outdoor patio and ample parking. Rental rates are on the website.

Leesburg Executive Airport

1001 Sycolin Road SE

703.737.7125

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=72>

The conference room on the third floor of the Leesburg Executive Airport's new terminal building is available for meetings of up to 40 people. The room has a drop-down projection screen, but no projector and is fully wired for internet access. Rental of the room is \$20 an hour with an additional cleaning charge of \$10 if food is brought in. Up to 20 spaces in the airport's parking lot can be reserved in conjunction with room rental. A reservation form is at <http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=77>

Mason Enterprise Center – Leesburg/Loudoun

202 Church Street SE

703.466.4061

<http://mec-leesburg.org>

The Mason Enterprise Center offers a wide variety of space for start-up entrepreneurs and small businesses from cubicles to multiple rooms. Amenities include use of conference and training rooms, wireless and network internet access and use of copier/printer/fax/scanner. For more information regarding available meeting space at the Mason Enterprise Center – Leesburg/Loudoun, please contact the Regional Manager Susan Henson at shenson2@gmu.edu or 703.466.0466.

Rust Library

380 Old Waterford Road

703.777.0323

www.library.loudoun.gov

This recently renovated Loudoun County public library features three conference rooms and can accommodate groups as large as 150 people. Library owned Audio Visual equipment may be requested for a nominal fee. Rental of the rooms is \$40 per hour; however, an additional charge may be applied for use after hours.

Thomas Balch Library

208 West Market Street

703.737.7195

www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=311

The Town of Leesburg's Thomas Balch Library has a meeting room that can accommodate up to 30 people in a conference style setting and up to 75 people in lecture seating. The room has a ceiling-mounted projector and drop-down screen and is fully wired for internet access. Parking is limited, but the Town Hall parking garage is less than two blocks east. Rental of the room is \$20 an hour.

Thomas Birkby House

109 Loudoun Street SW

703.777.2700

www.birkbyhouse.com

Built in the 1820s, the Thomas Birkby House is located in the heart of historic downtown Leesburg. Meeting facilities range from small conference rooms in the main house to the Carriage House which can accommodate up to 60 people in theater-style setting. Beverage service is available and catered meals can be arranged. Call for fee schedule.

Hotels

The hotels listed below all have meeting rooms available for rent. For information about the specific facilities and amenities, contact the sales staff at each hotel.

Best Western Leesburg

726 East Market Street

703.777.9400

Comfort Suites

80 Prosperity Avenue SE

703.669.1650

Days Inn
721 East Market Street
703.777.6622

Holiday Inn at Carradoc Hall
1500 East Market Street
703.771.9200

Hampton Inn & Suites
117 Fort Evans Road NE
703.669.8640

Homewood Suites
115 Fort Evans Road NE
571.258.1068

Other Meeting Venues

For information about other meeting venues in and around Leesburg, contact Visit Loudoun at 703.771.2170 or www.visitloudoun.org/meetings.

Resources:

Retail Gap Analysis: Each year, the Town of Leesburg sources data from the Nielsen Company that measures the economic activity among several merchandise lines in Leesburg's retail sector. This report compares the amount of money spent on various products and services versus the amount taken in by the retailers in the same geographic areas. This valuable information is an important tool in market analysis and is part of an overall picture in determining the feasibility of a business or merchandise line.

You can access this report at:

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=13537>

Business Development Package: The Town of Leesburg has developed a Business Development Package designed to give prospects and new businesses demographic and other information to start their new business in Leesburg. You can access the package at the following link: <http://www.leesburgva.gov/modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=13851>

Local

Town of Leesburg
25 West Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176
703.777.2420
www.leesburgva.gov (Town Information)

Leesburg Economic Development Department
202 Church Street SE
Leesburg, VA 20175
703-737-7019
www.leesburgva.gov/business
(Economic Development)

Loudoun County
1 Harrison Street, SE
PO Box 7000
Leesburg, VA 20178
703.777.0100
www.loudoun.gov (County Information)
biz.loudoun.gov (Economic Development)

Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

19301 Winmeade Drive, Suite 210
Lansdowne VA 20176
703.777.2176
www.loudounchamber.org

Loudoun Small Business Development Center

202 Church Street, SE
Leesburg, VA 20175
703.430.7222
www.loudounsfdc.org

Mason Enterprise Center – Leesburg/Loudoun

202 Church Street, SE
Leesburg, VA 20175
Telephone: 703.466.0466
<http://mec-leesburg.org>

Visit Loudoun

112-G South Street SE
Leesburg VA 20175
703.771.2170
www.visitloudoun.org

State

Virginia State Corporation Commission

P.O. Box 1197
Richmond, VA 23218
Telephone: 804.371.9967 or toll-free 800.552.7945
www.scc.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Taxation

PO Box 1115
Richmond, VA 23218
Telephone: 804.367.8037
www.tax.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Business Assistance

707 E. Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219
PO Box 446
Richmond, VA 23218-0446
Telephone: 804.371.8200 or toll-free 866.248.8814
www.dba.virginia.gov

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

PO Box 798
901 East Byrd Street
Richmond, VA 23218
Telephone: 804.545.5600
www.yesvirginia.org

Federal

Small Business Administration

Washington District Office
740 15th Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone 202.272.0345 or toll-free 800.827.5722
www.sba.gov/dc

Internal Revenue Service

5205 Leesburg Pike
Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041
Telephone: 202.272.0345
toll-free: 800-829-4933
www.irs.gov

Events:

The Town of Leesburg hosts three major events each year that offer the business community resources and opportunities to network and grow their businesses. There is no cost to participate and all Leesburg businesses are welcome!

The Leesburg Business Awards is held in May of each year, and celebrates the Town's business community with awards in eleven different categories, including the George C. Marshall award, which celebrates Leesburg's most distinguished business leader for the year. We invite you to learn more about the premier business event in Leesburg by visiting our web site at:

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=217>

The Leesburg Youth Career Expo offers businesses the chance to meet Leesburg's best and brightest young people and offer them the chance to work for great companies like yours! For more information, contact Marantha Edwards, Director of Economic Development, at medwards@leesburgva.gov

The Leesburg Virtual Realty Tour is held in September of each year and offers businesses and entrepreneurs who are looking for property the opportunity to see what is available in the Town of Leesburg. Commercial Realtors showcase their properties via power point for businesses considering a new location in Town or those looking to expand. The Virtual Realty Tour also hosts forums on planning and zoning issues and other topics relevant to the Leesburg real estate market. For more information, contact Marantha Edwards, Director of Economic Development, at medwards@leesburgva.gov

Community Engagement:

The Leesburg Economic Development Commission (EDC) is charged with ensuring the economic vitality and stability of the Town of Leesburg. The Commission works to retain and expand existing businesses, attract and recruit desirable new businesses and enhance economic activities that will benefit local businesses and residents. The EDC administers the **Ambassador Program**. The mission of this program is to expand the reach of economic development efforts through visits by trained ambassadors who are knowledgeable about the Town's resources. To schedule a visit from an ambassador, contact Marantha Edwards, Director of Economic Development at medwards@leesburgva.gov

Leesburg Listservs The Town of Leesburg maintains a number of listservs (automated email distribution lists) that provide citizens with timely, topic-specific information, such as: the Leesburg Executive Airport, Business & Economic Development, Capital Projects, Parks and Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Police and Public Information. You can subscribe to this service at:

<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=924>

Leesburg Biz Buzz is the Town's online newsletter serving the business community. The Biz Buzz has all the latest information on the business community, grand openings and ribbon cuttings and Leesburg

EDC meeting information. You can subscribe to Leesburg's Biz Buzz at:
<http://www.leesburgva.gov/index.aspx?page=759>

Industry Forums:

The Town of Leesburg's economic development department hosts industry forums on topic ranging from banking and finance and customer service to hospitality and social media marketing. The Town brings in top experts to provide Leesburg's business community the latest information to help them prosper. For the latest information on upcoming seminars and forums, visit www.leesburgva.gov/business